

As I enter through the granite portico into the cool church building, I'm immediately enveloped into a serene atmosphere one feels you could reach out and slice a portion of. From the hot Cornish summer outside into this oasis of calm I feel relieved. There are a few people dotted about in the pews, some praying, some just sitting quietly and some talking in hushed tones. There is a beautiful candle-stand with a number of tea lights flickering. I'm greeted by warm smiles from a group standing at the back who greet me. "You must be the journalist." A middle aged chap in jeans and T-shirt says. They obviously knew I was coming. We talk for a few minutes and I'm invited to meet their minister. She is an elderly lady wearing purple, who shakes my hand and seems gentle and aptly calm for this dulcet scene. I'm invited to stay for the service which will start in half an hour, and in the meantime we talk about the church and how things got started.

The building was obviously a church in bygone times, but had lain empty for several decades until local lay Christians decided to try and renovate. St. Farley is a nice town near the Cornish coast, but the female minister Clare tells me there are problems. "We have a lot of poor people here, living on the bread line, jobs are scarce and many have drug problems. There just wasn't a lot for young people to get involved with. It's not an easy place to grow up in." She explains. The Church is Unitarian, and welcomes all people, regardless of faith denomination. "We even have people of other faiths use the space sometimes, we don't see a problem." The motto of Saint Barnabas is 'God is Love' and adorns the lintel above the door, painted on a wooden plaque.

The Church fills with maybe another dozen people and we sit in the pews as Reverend Clare takes the pulpit. Her greetings are loose and informal with an air of relaxed command. She gives a pleasant talk on the nature of faith and salvation, focussing on the imperative of giving without expectation, to be the change in the world we want to see. It reminds me of a speech I heard the Dalai Lama once give about 'changing ourselves in order to change the world'. She weaves a healthy dose of humour into the sermon and it all seems achievable. Although not a Christian myself, I find I have to agree with most of what she says. "If you reflect divine love out into the world, you will feel peace, and put others at peace."

A small pipe organ in the corner I'd not noticed before, begins a melodic dirge and we sing a hymn projected onto a screen above the lectern. It's not a rousing or raucous sound, but very beguiling and beautiful. The congregation all sing up, but none too loud. It's a chorus in unison, living up to the Unitarian epitaph of the church organisation. Even as an outsider, there just isn't much scope for feeling left out. Somehow I just feel included. After the hymn we sit again and are encouraged to talk with each other. I speak to Sean, a young man in a hoody with a broad grin. "I came in to see what they were doing in here, and just sort of got hooked." He said. "My Mum & Dad are Roman Catholic, but I never got on there, this is much more easy-going."

After people dissipate until the evening service. I have a talk with Reverend Clare in the chancery. "We preserved the original name - Saint Barnabas." She tells me. "He was one of the early christians, but this church was shut for so long, we just kickstarted it back into life. Overall we believe in common

sense and the dire need in this world for projects where good people can meet other good people to share their troubles and joys in this oftentimes seemingly sufferable world of pain, old age, disease and death. The light of life is fragile flames of real people with real feelings and reality with God becoming the common denominator. We do a lot of philanthropic works, soup kitchen in our church hall down the road, youth projects etc. but what people really need is hope, and faith... a little faith goes a long way." Again, I have to agree with her.